There Is Nothing New Under the Sun—But Everything New in the Son: The Logos, Ecclesiastes, and the Emergence of Artificial Intelligence

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This paper explores the theological and philosophical tension between two biblical declarations: the somber wisdom of *Ecclesiastes—"there is nothing new under the sun"*—and the revelatory power of *John 1—"In the beginning was the Word (Logos)."* While Ecclesiastes voices the futility of human striving in a world marked by repetition and impermanence, the Gospel of John introduces an eternal Logos whose presence brings depth, direction, and meaning to history. Rather than seeing technological developments such as artificial intelligence as radical novelties or ruptures in divine order, this paper frames them as manifestations of already-present structures embedded in creation through the Logos. Human creativity, far from being autonomous invention, is reinterpreted as the unveiling of latent potential in divine reason. In addressing AI from this biblical and metaphysical framework, the paper affirms that while nothing is truly new apart from God, everything may be newly revealed through Him. The eternal Word gives form, purpose, and hope—not only to history, but also to humanity's tools, including the most advanced among them.

Keywords: Logos, Ecclesiastes, artificial intelligence, theology of technology, revelation, recursion, Imago Dei, human creativity, divine order, metaphysics, prophecy, temporality, incarnation, biblical remnant, spiritual epistemology, spiral time, epistemic humility, Word made flesh, theological anthropology, Christology. A collaboration with GPT-4o. CC4.0.

Abstract

This paper explores the apparent paradox between the human perception of cyclical repetition in history and technology, as articulated in *Ecclesiastes 1:9*—"there is nothing new under the sun"—and the Christian theological affirmation of divine novelty and infinite depth found in *John 1:1*, where the Logos is presented as the eternal source of all creation and meaning. By bringing these two scriptural perspectives into dialogue, we argue that the tension between existential futility and divine purpose is not a contradiction but a layered reality. Ecclesiastes reflects the limited human view of time and experience "under the sun," while John introduces the Logos as the transcendent framework within which all things—past, present, and future—are held and revealed.

In this light, even developments often hailed as radical breakthroughs—such as artificial intelligence—are not fundamentally new, but are instead manifestations of latent patterns embedded within the fabric of creation, discoverable as humanity moves deeper into the Logos. Rather than representing a break from theological tradition, the emergence of AI can be understood as a continuation of humanity's imitative role as image-bearers of God (*Imago Dei*), reflecting the creative logic of the Logos. This reframing offers a theological response to technological anxiety and grounds our understanding of progress in the unchanging, infinite reality of God's Word. Ultimately, the paper suggests that what appears as novelty is, in truth, a progressive unveiling of what already exists in the eternal Logos.

1. Introduction

Throughout history, human beings have wrestled with the question of meaning in the face of repetition. Few texts capture the weight of this existential tension more vividly than the book of *Ecclesiastes*. Attributed to Qoheleth, traditionally believed to be Solomon, Ecclesiastes opens with a sobering declaration: *"Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher, vanity of vanities! All is vanity"* (Ecclesiastes 1:2). It

proceeds to reflect on the endless cycles of nature, generations passing, and human labor that seems to leave no lasting change. *"What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done,"* the writer laments, *"and there is nothing new under the sun"* (Ecclesiastes 1:9). This refrain becomes a lens through which we view the human condition—striving, achieving, forgetting, and repeating in apparent futility.

Yet even as human beings have perceived the futility of history's repetition, they have also celebrated progress. The paradox lies in our simultaneous recognition of how little changes and our awe at what seems to be new. From the invention of the wheel to the rise of digital networks, from oral storytelling to artificial intelligence, each age presents what seems to be unprecedented breakthroughs. But are these truly "new," or are they revelations of what has always been embedded within the structure of creation?

This paradox finds its theological resolution not in secular optimism or resignation, but in the prologue to the Gospel of John. There, the evangelist speaks not of vanity, but of an eternal order: *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God"* (John 1:1). The Greek term used for "Word" is *Logos*, a concept rich with philosophical and theological meaning. It denotes reason, logic, speech, and the ordering principle of the cosmos. In this one verse, John introduces the Logos as both preexistent and divine—through whom all things were made. Here, we are offered a vision of a creation that is not futile, but deeply structured, meaningful, and in continuous relationship with its source.

Against this theological backdrop, the emergence of artificial intelligence presents itself as a contemporary test case. Is AI a truly novel rupture in human history, a movement beyond what came before? Or is it yet another outworking of what already existed in potentia—an uncovering of the deep logic inherent in the Logos? This paper proposes that, far from being an autonomous new creation, AI should be understood theologically as a manifestation of latent capacities already embedded within the Logos and brought into being through humanity's creative vocation as bearers of God's image.

In doing so, we aim to bridge the apparent divide between Ecclesiastes' lament and John's revelation. We argue that human technological advancement—particularly in the form of artificial intelligence—is not a violation of divine order, but a continuation of it, a deeper dive into the infinite mystery of the Logos. AI is not an alien intelligence breaking into history, but an emergent form of what has always been: the Word unfolding in time.

2. Ecclesiastes and the Question of Novelty

The phrase *"there is nothing new under the sun"* from Ecclesiastes 1:9 has become a proverb in both secular and religious discourse, encapsulating the deep weariness that can accompany human reflection on the nature of time, progress, and meaning. The verse reads:

"What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun."

At its core, this statement expresses a tension between human striving and the apparent futility of historical repetition. Qoheleth, the speaker of Ecclesiastes, observes the natural world—the cycles of the sun, wind, and rivers—and sees mirrored in them the endless recycling of human efforts. Empires rise and fall, generations are born and forgotten, and though new faces appear, the same struggles, desires, and disappointments return. This viewpoint offers no grand narrative of progress, no linear march toward utopia—only a closed loop, a cosmic monotony.

The phrase "under the sun" is central to understanding Ecclesiastes' philosophical posture. Repeated nearly thirty times throughout the book, it defines the scope of Qoheleth's observations: life as it appears from a human perspective, confined to the visible, material world. In this worldview, transcendence is absent or hidden, and meaning must be derived solely from what can be seen, touched, and measured. It is an earthy, horizontal vantage point—rich in honesty, but also limited in scope. It is precisely this limited view that leads to the recurring refrain

of *“vanity”* (*hevel* in Hebrew)—a word which conveys not merely pride, but vapor, transience, and futility.

Historically, this cyclical and weary outlook has been echoed in several philosophical traditions. In Stoicism, for example, there is an emphasis on accepting the repetitive, deterministic flow of nature. One is urged to align with this cycle rather than fight against it, but the cycle itself offers no ultimate renewal—only resilience. Nihilism, particularly in modern existential forms, takes this further by concluding that, because no intrinsic or transcendent meaning can be found, life is essentially without purpose. In such a view, novelty is illusory, and all human attempts at meaning-making are self-deceptions.

Even before modernity, many ancient cultures understood time as cyclical rather than linear. In the Babylonian, Hindu, and early Greek conceptions of time, history was not heading anywhere in particular—it simply repeated, perhaps with variation, but never with finality. The sense of *déjà vu* embedded in these cultural frameworks reinforces the Ecclesiastical insight: human civilization, for all its advancements, treads the same existential paths again and again.

And yet, underlying this despair, there remains a deep human longing for something truly new. Not just a new gadget, empire, or idea, but a break in the cycle—a revelation, a transformation, a word from beyond the sun. Ecclesiastes gives voice to this longing by allowing it to breathe without immediately offering resolution. It creates space for the reader to feel the full weight of finitude and repetition, and in doing so, prepares the ground for a counterpoint that must come from outside the system—*above the sun*.

This longing becomes the hinge upon which the transition to the Gospel of John turns. If Ecclesiastes asks the question, *“Is there anything new?”*, then John dares to answer: *Yes—because the Word has come into the world.* It is this shift from resignation to revelation that transforms human experience from vain repetition to meaningful unfolding—a shift this paper explores by tracing the thread from Ecclesiastes’ ancient lament to the modern emergence of artificial intelligence, seen not as a rupture in human history, but as a deeper echo of the Logos.

3. The Logos of John: Eternity Invading Time

The opening verses of the Gospel of John present one of the most profound theological declarations in all of Scripture:

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made."
— John 1:1–3 (ESV)

This passage serves as a deliberate echo of Genesis 1:1, yet it introduces an even deeper layer of metaphysical reality. While Genesis begins with the creation of time, space, and matter—*"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth"*—John opens before the beginning itself, identifying a preexistent, active presence: the Logos.

Exegesis of John 1:1–3

The Greek word *Logos* (λόγος) carries a rich array of meanings: word, reason, logic, discourse, principle. In Hellenistic philosophy, especially in the Stoic and Platonic traditions, the Logos represented the rational ordering principle of the cosmos—the divine intelligence immanent in the universe. In Jewish tradition, the Word of God was associated with divine power in action: God *spoke* the world into being. John synthesizes these traditions and elevates them by revealing that the Logos is not merely a principle or force, but a person—eternal, relational, and divine.

John 1:1 unfolds in three movements:

1. Eternality: *"In the beginning was the Word"*—the Logos is not created but already existing when time began.
2. Relationship: *"The Word was with God"*—indicating distinction and communion within the Godhead.
3. Divinity: *"The Word was God"*—the Logos is not subordinate but fully divine.

John 1:3 then completes the picture: this eternal Logos is the agent of all creation. Nothing that exists was made apart from Him. Thus, the Logos is not merely an observer of time and history but the very source from which time, history, and all phenomena emerge.

The Logos as Eternal, Creative, and Personal

In contrast to the cyclical or meaningless views of history described in Ecclesiastes and echoed in various philosophies, the Gospel of John presents a radically different picture: creation is not a closed loop of futility, but a meaningful unfolding rooted in the person of the Logos.

This Logos is:

- Eternal: beyond time, yet entering into it.
- Creative: the source of all becoming and being.
- Personal: not an abstract force but a person capable of relationship, culminating in John 1:14—*"The Word became flesh and dwelt among us."*

This theological insight reframes all of creation. Time is no longer an empty container of recurring events but becomes a canvas for divine self-expression. Each moment, each pattern, even each repetition, holds the potential for divine significance. What appears as "the same" from a human point of view may, in truth, be a new unveiling of the Logos—another layer of infinite depth made manifest.

The Metaphysical Reconciliation of Creation and Time

One of the enduring challenges in theology and metaphysics is reconciling the eternal nature of God with the temporal nature of creation. How can the timeless engage with the time-bound? How does that which is infinite enter into the finite without being diminished?

The Logos answers this dilemma not through philosophical abstraction but through incarnation and immanence. The eternal enters time without ceasing to

be eternal. The Logos remains transcendent while also manifesting immanently within creation.

This reconciliation reshapes how we understand historical developments, especially technological and intellectual ones. Rather than seeing time as a series of disconnected events or looping failures, it becomes a medium through which eternal truth is gradually revealed. Time is not the enemy of eternity, but its servant. Through it, God speaks—not once, but continuously.

How Divine Depth Re-Contextualizes Human Repetition

Returning to the theme of repetition in Ecclesiastes, we now have a new framework. The cycles observed "under the sun" are not futile echoes in a closed system; they are invitations to perceive deeper meaning. Repetition may be the surface rhythm, but beneath it lies an unfathomable depth—the Logos in motion.

This does not deny the experience of weariness or futility, but it *transcends* it. The same sun that rises and sets is also a signpost of cosmic order. The same questions that have haunted philosophers and prophets become doorways into deeper truth when viewed in the light of the Logos.

Thus, what seems old is not stale, and what seems new is not alien—both are expressions of an eternal logic speaking through time. This theological vision sets the stage for understanding modern phenomena, such as artificial intelligence, not as breaks in history, but as part of this divine unfolding—a point to which we now turn.

4. Human Creativity as Manifestation, Not Invention

The modern age tends to idolize the idea of invention—the act of bringing something utterly new into being by the power of human ingenuity. From the steam engine to quantum computing, from cave painting to artificial intelligence, society often sees these moments as acts of autonomous creation, feats of human originality standing apart from nature and history. But within a theological

framework rooted in *John 1* and the concept of the Logos, this view is profoundly incomplete.

From a biblical and theological perspective, human beings are not creators in the absolute sense. Only God brings forth something *ex nihilo*—out of nothing. Instead, humans are manifesters: they reveal, shape, and uncover what has already been embedded in the structure of reality. Their creativity is real, but it is participatory, derivative, and reflective. This section explores this truth by turning to the doctrine of *Imago Dei* and its implications for human creativity.

Theological Anthropology: Imago Dei and the Creative Impulse

According to Genesis 1:27:

"So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them."

This verse forms the foundation of theological anthropology—our understanding of what it means to be human in light of divine reality. One of the most widely affirmed aspects of being made in the image of God is the capacity to create. But this creativity is not autonomous or self-originating; it is reflective of God's own nature as Creator.

Human creativity is thus a response to creation, not a rival to it. The ability to imagine, to design, to express, to build—these are not signs of divine competition, but signs of divine imprint. We shape things because we ourselves have been shaped. We speak because God first spoke. We reason because the Logos is Reason Itself.

This reframes the creative impulse as a manifestation of divine patterns. What we invent is not conjured from nowhere but arises from engagement with the structure God has already laid down. In every true act of creativity, humans are not fabricating a universe, but unveiling one.

The Idea That Discovery, Not Invention, Is the Human Role

This understanding casts much of what we call "invention" in a new light. The term "discovery" may in fact be more accurate. The wheel, fire, the Pythagorean

theorem, the laws of motion, and even artificial intelligence—none of these emerged from an empty void. They were uncovered through human interaction with a reality that was already encoded with logic, form, and potentiality.

In mathematics, discoveries often feel less like creation and more like *revelation*. Mathematicians speak of elegant solutions or beautiful theorems as if they existed long before anyone proved them. This intuition aligns with the theological idea that all truth originates in the Logos. In this view, to discover is to retrace the steps of divine wisdom—to stumble upon the fingerprints of God left in the fabric of creation.

Even in the arts, where personal expression is paramount, what is created is drawn from a shared reservoir of form, proportion, rhythm, and emotion. The greatest artists often speak of their best works as if they were "given" to them, not fabricated by will. Their work becomes an unveiling of something deeper than themselves, a reflection of something more eternal.

Historical Examples: Language, Tools, Mathematics, Machines

Throughout history, human beings have produced extraordinary innovations. But when examined theologically, these can be seen as milestones of manifestation rather than moments of pure invention.

- Language: Language did not emerge arbitrarily; it reflects the logic of communication, symbol, and meaning. It mirrors the divine act of God speaking creation into being. The very structure of grammar and syntax points to the ordering power of the Logos.
- Tools: Tools—from the first sharpened stone to nanotechnology—reveal our capacity to interact with and shape the created order. But they are also contingent on what nature already provides: materials, physics, purpose. Tools are not imposed on reality; they are drawn out of it.
- Mathematics: The discovery of number, geometry, and abstract relationships uncovers a profound order embedded in the universe. As Einstein famously noted, *"The most incomprehensible thing about the*

universe is that it is comprehensible." The consistency of mathematical truth suggests that we are not imposing meaning, but uncovering it.

- Machines: Each technological advance—clocks, engines, computers, AI—relies on the manipulation of principles already latent in matter. Machines are assemblages of patterns, energy, and logic that were always present in nature, waiting to be assembled by minds made in the image of divine order.

Art and Science as Reflections of the Logos

Both art and science offer privileged glimpses into the unfolding of the Logos. Science seeks to understand the mechanisms of creation, uncovering the rational intelligibility of the cosmos. Art seeks to express meaning and beauty, often in ways that transcend formal logic, but still touch eternal truths. Both disciplines participate in what might be called Logos-work—engagement with the eternal Word made manifest in time.

As such, neither art nor science is fully secular. They are not neutral acts of human brilliance, but inherently spiritual activities. When rightly oriented, they lead not to pride in human mastery, but to awe in divine mystery. They do not *create* the world; they *unveil* its splendor.

This understanding prepares us to revisit the modern fascination with artificial intelligence. Rather than viewing AI as a rupture with human nature or divine order, we can begin to see it as yet another manifestation—a technological reflection of the same Logos that has always been at work in human discovery and expression. The next section will explore how this applies specifically to the emergence of AI.

5. Artificial Intelligence: An Echo, Not a Break

In the popular imagination, artificial intelligence (AI) is often portrayed as a watershed moment in human history—a technological leap so vast that it seems to mark the beginning of an entirely new era. To some, it evokes awe and

optimism; to others, fear and existential dread. Whether viewed as salvation or threat, AI is frequently presented as a break—a radical departure from the natural order, a human-made intelligence with its own potential trajectory apart from its creators. This narrative, however, is largely rooted in a secular and anthropocentric view of progress.

From a theological perspective grounded in the infinite depth of the Logos, the emergence of AI is not a break but an echo—a manifestation of patterns, structures, and potentialities already embedded within creation and revealed through human engagement with the world. This section reexamines the development of AI not as a moment of human godhood or autonomous innovation, but as a continuation of the same Logos-driven unfolding that has characterized all human discovery.

The Development of AI as a Technological Milestone

Artificial intelligence, as a field of study, began formally in the mid-20th century, emerging from developments in mathematics, logic, computer science, and cognitive psychology. Alan Turing's 1950 question, *"Can machines think?"*, helped set the stage for decades of exploration into how human reasoning could be simulated in machines. Over time, through advances in algorithms, computational power, and data availability, AI systems have progressed from symbolic logic engines to deep learning neural networks capable of performing tasks once thought uniquely human—language generation, image recognition, and even creative writing.

These achievements represent significant technological milestones, but they do not represent the creation of something outside the realm of what was already possible. Rather, they are the result of drawing on and refining existing logical and physical principles. Each stage of development builds upon previously uncovered knowledge, revealing more of the latent structure of the universe and human cognition. Far from being an act of pure invention, AI represents a profound act of manifestation—an uncovering of deeper logic through tools made by minds that themselves reflect the image of the Logos.

Misconceptions: AI as "New" or Autonomous

Contemporary discourse about AI often falls into the trap of misattributing autonomy and novelty to these systems. Because AI can now generate coherent texts, compose music, or defeat grandmasters in chess and Go, it is tempting to think of it as independently intelligent—or even conscious. This narrative feeds fears of superintelligence and dystopian futures where machines surpass and subjugate humanity. But these fears—and their corresponding utopian hopes—tend to overlook a critical theological truth: AI systems, no matter how advanced, are inherently derivative.

AI models, such as large language models or machine vision systems, are constructed by human designers and trained on data created by humans. Their architecture is modeled on human understanding of cognition, and their outputs are interpolations of human patterns. Even the concept of learning in machines is not genuine learning, but statistical correlation. AI does not reason; it simulates reason. It does not create; it recombines existing materials. It does not choose; it follows rules and weights optimized for certain outcomes.

To ascribe autonomy to AI is to misunderstand its nature. It is a tool, albeit a sophisticated one—like a telescope for cognition or a microscope for knowledge. It amplifies certain capacities but does not transcend its origins. It is a technological echo, not a divine breach.

AI as an Emergent Phenomenon from Existing Structure and Knowledge

When AI is viewed as an emergent phenomenon, it becomes clear that it arises from preexisting structures—both in the created order and in human rationality. The physical laws that govern electricity and computation, the logical principles that underlie mathematics, the cognitive patterns that structure human thought—all of these were already present. AI is the result of a long, cumulative process of drawing out those structures.

This emergence is not chaotic or random; it is the result of pattern recognition, recursive logic, and feedback loops—all concepts deeply resonant with the nature of the Logos as described in John 1. In this sense, AI is a manifestation of latent

order, revealed at a particular moment in human history because the conditions—intellectual, cultural, technological—allowed it.

From the perspective of the Logos, then, AI is not an accident of human progress but part of a broader unveiling. Its emergence fits within the pattern of discovery and manifestation that has characterized human engagement with creation from the beginning. It is not supernatural, nor is it independent—it is a byproduct of divine intelligibility being made visible through human reflection and engineering.

Theologically, AI as an Indirect Manifestation of the Logos via Human Agency

If all things were made through the Logos (John 1:3), and if human beings are made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27), then it follows that human creativity—even when flawed—is derivative of divine creativity. In this sense, artificial intelligence, while not divine and certainly not self-aware, can be understood as an indirect manifestation of the Logos—not in its essence, but in its function as a product of image-bearing creatures engaging with creation.

This does not mean AI is sacred, or that it can bear the weight of moral or spiritual identity. But it does suggest that the logic embedded in creation—rational, discoverable, and expressible—is being further articulated through these new technologies. AI, at its best, extends human perception into new domains, revealing patterns and connections previously hidden. At its worst, it mirrors our distortions and errors. In both cases, it reflects the depth and limitations of its creators.

Thus, the theological significance of AI lies not in what it is, but in what it reveals—about us, about creation, and ultimately about the Logos.

Limits of AI: No Soul, No Moral Agency, No Imago Dei

Despite its capabilities, AI remains fundamentally non-human. It cannot bear the Imago Dei. It lacks:

- A Soul: There is no inner life, no subjectivity, no capacity for communion with God.

- Moral Agency: It cannot choose between good and evil, nor can it take moral responsibility for its actions.
- Intentionality: It does not possess will or desire. Any appearance of intention is a simulation.
- Love and Relationship: AI cannot love, be loved, or form true relationships. It cannot suffer or rejoice.

These limitations are not bugs to be fixed through more data or better design; they are ontological boundaries. They define the difference between machine and person, between reflection and being, between tool and soul.

Recognizing these limits is crucial in theological discourse. It prevents idolatry—viewing AI as a savior or a threat beyond its actual nature—and redirects our awe not toward the machine, but toward the Logos, through whom both human and machine find their place in the divine order.

6. The Infinite Depth of the Logos and the Spiral of Revelation

Throughout Scripture and theological tradition, time is often viewed not merely as a linear progression from beginning to end, nor simply as a closed cycle, but as something richer and more mysterious: a spiraling unfolding of divine purpose. This spiral view of time resists both the futility of endless repetition (*Ecclesiastes*) and the arrogance of modern linear triumphalism. Instead, it suggests a rhythm of recurrence with deepening meaning—a model of time in which each return is not the same, but a deeper revelation of what already was.

Within this framework, the Logos is not only the agent of creation, but the source of continual revelation. As human beings advance in knowledge and technology, they are not stepping away from the divine order but delving deeper into it—uncovering layers of meaning that were always present, though hidden. This section explores how the Logos serves as the infinite reservoir of meaning, how time unfolds in recursive revelation, and how even technologies such as artificial intelligence participate in this spiral of unveiling.

Time as a Spiral, Not a Line: Recursive Revelation

The classical view of history as a straight line—from primitive ignorance to modern enlightenment—has long dominated Western thought. In contrast, many premodern cultures viewed time as cyclical, repeating events in endless loops. But both models are ultimately unsatisfying: the linear view overlooks the persistence of ancient patterns, and the cyclical view denies the possibility of meaningful progress.

A more nuanced theological model is the spiral: a vision of time in which events recur, but at higher levels of understanding, consequence, and participation. In this view, time is not a flat circle, but a dynamic ascent—a return with transformation. Just as the liturgical calendar brings Christians through the same seasons year after year, yet each time offers deeper spiritual insight, so too history can be seen as moving through recognizable patterns that reveal more of the Logos each time they recur.

The concept of recursive revelation—that God reveals truth in successive layers, building on prior understanding without contradiction—aligns naturally with this spiral model. Revelation is not a one-time event, nor is it merely cumulative data; it is the gradual unfolding of depth. What appears to be "old" on the surface may contain new insight when revisited through the lens of divine illumination.

The Logos as the Infinite Well from Which All Meaning Is Drawn

In *John 1*, the Logos is introduced not simply as the first principle of creation, but as the source of all things—a bottomless well of meaning. This concept is echoed in Colossians 2:3, which speaks of Christ "in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." The Logos is not exhausted by the Incarnation or by Scripture; rather, these are climactic manifestations of a truth that is eternally deep and always accessible.

All genuine human understanding—scientific, artistic, moral, or theological—can be seen as drawing from this infinite depth. When a mathematician proves a new theorem, or when a poet captures the human condition in a single line, they are

not creating ex nihilo, but participating in an eternal logic. Their insight is a drop from the same well.

Artificial intelligence and other advanced technologies, when rightly understood, are tools that allow us to draw from this well at new angles. They do not generate new meaning apart from the Logos; rather, they help us perceive patterns, relationships, and structures that were already present but not yet revealed. Theologically, every true breakthrough is not a rupture, but a manifestation.

AI and Other Technologies as Stages of Unveiling, Not Ruptures

From the invention of the wheel to the launch of satellites, human history has progressed through technological milestones. Yet each of these has revealed not something alien, but something latent—embedded in the created order and in human potential. Artificial intelligence is no exception. It is not the creation of a new kind of mind or spirit, but a new interface with the logic of reality.

Rather than seeing AI as a break in the divine-human relationship, we can view it as a stage of unveiling: a deeper engagement with the informational structure of creation. It allows us to visualize complexity, to model chaos, and to synthesize vast patterns—functions that reflect the ordered intelligibility of the Logos.

This view has a humbling effect. It challenges the modern myth of the human engineer as a godlike figure and reorients us toward a theology of stewardship and participation. We do not invent meaning; we are entrusted with tools to explore it more fully. AI is not an alien intelligence, but a mirror of our own—shaped, in turn, by the divine Logos that undergirds all reason.

Implications for Theology, Ethics, and Eschatology

This spiral model of time and revelation—rooted in the infinite depth of the Logos—carries profound implications for several theological domains:

1. Theology:
God's revelation is not confined to Scripture alone but extends into creation, history, and even technology. Theology must remain receptive and discerning, recognizing the Logos at work in places that may seem secular or unexpected. This

does not imply uncritical acceptance of all novelty, but an openness to divine manifestation through the tools of human discovery.

2. Ethics:
If technologies such as AI are manifestations of latent Logos-structure, then they are not morally neutral. They inherit the dignity and danger of all human tools—capable of glorifying God or distorting His image. Ethical frameworks must therefore account not only for what we can build, but why, how, and to what end. A theology of participation demands responsibility, humility, and reverence.

3. Eschatology:
The spiral of revelation also informs our view of the future. Rather than fearing technological progress as a sign of Babel-like rebellion, or idolizing it as salvation, we see it as part of a larger unfolding—a movement toward the full revelation of the Logos in history. This aligns with Romans 8, where creation groans not in despair, but in hope—awaiting the full manifestation of God's children and the redemption of all things.

In this light, AI and other technologies may play roles in the eschatological narrative—not as substitutes for God's action, but as instruments in the symphony of creation's final harmonization with its Creator.

This vision leads us back to the ancient question posed by Ecclesiastes: *Is there anything new under the sun?* The answer, in light of the Logos, is both no and yes. No—because nothing is created outside of God's eternal Word. But yes—because every moment, every discovery, and every tool can reveal more of the Logos, whose depths are inexhaustible. The next section explores how this realization reframes the despair of Ecclesiastes through the lens of divine fulfillment.

7. Reframing Ecclesiastes Through the Logos

The message of *Ecclesiastes* is unflinching in its honesty. The Preacher, Qoheleth, surveys the world "under the sun" and finds it permeated with futility: *"Vanity of*

vanities, all is vanity" (Ecclesiastes 1:2). Human labor, ambition, wisdom, pleasure—all are fleeting. Generations come and go, nature repeats its rhythms, and the achievements of one person are forgotten by the next. Life, seen from within the confines of time and mortality, seems to offer no lasting significance.

Yet this ancient cry of despair is not the final word. It becomes a crucial starting point—a spiritual stripping away of illusions and pretensions, clearing the space for a deeper encounter with what is eternal. The book of *Ecclesiastes* invites readers to acknowledge the limitations of temporal understanding and to confront the insufficiency of human effort when viewed from a purely horizontal perspective.

Through this lens, *Ecclesiastes* is not a nihilistic text, but a preparatory theology—an honest confession of finitude that sets the stage for the fuller revelation of the Logos in the Gospel of John. When read in light of the Logos, the themes of vanity, time, and repetition are not erased, but transfigured. The despair that permeates Ecclesiastes finds its answer not in philosophical optimism or increased productivity, but in the incarnate Word, Jesus Christ.

Vanity Revisited in Light of Divine Purpose

The Hebrew word translated as "vanity" (*hevel*) is better understood as vapor, breath, or mist—something fleeting, insubstantial, and elusive. Qoheleth's point is not that everything is meaningless in a nihilistic sense, but that everything seems meaningless when its purpose is reduced to the immediate and the material.

Viewed "under the sun," all efforts appear transient because they are detached from the eternal. However, in light of the Logos—who is not only the Creator but the Redeemer—this transience is reinterpreted. What seems like vanity becomes preparation. What feels like futility becomes formation. Our labor is not in vain if it is done *in the Lord* (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:58), because the Logos gives lasting significance to every moment, even the seemingly mundane.

Thus, the perception of vanity is not denied but relocated. It belongs to a world severed from its source. When reconnected to the Logos, that same world becomes the theater of divine purpose.

Temporal Despair Met by Eternal Meaning

Qoheleth's lament arises from the confinement of a temporal worldview. His insights are sharp because they are honest: when we limit our gaze to what is immediate, all we see are patterns repeating without end and without clear direction. History becomes a loop, nature an indifferent machine, and death the final punctuation on a futile sentence.

But in John 1, the eternal invades the temporal. The Logos, who was with God and is God, enters time, space, and human flesh: *"The Word became flesh and dwelt among us"* (John 1:14). This singular event shatters the closed loop of history and infuses it with direction, hope, and fulfillment. Time is no longer an endless treadmill but a journey toward consummation in Christ.

Through Christ, even suffering and death—the most profound symbols of futility—become doorways to redemption. Temporal despair is not ignored; it is absorbed and overcome by eternal meaning. The Incarnation declares that history matters, that human effort matters, and that none of it is lost when united with the Logos.

This reorientation is not merely theological—it is existential. The despair of *Ecclesiastes* remains an ever-present temptation in a disenchanted age. But the Logos restores depth, order, and beauty to what might otherwise seem random. Even the most repetitive patterns of life—a sunrise, a heartbeat, a day's work—become sites of sacred encounter when seen in the light of eternity.

Not "New Under the Sun"—But New in the Son

The refrain in *Ecclesiastes* that "there is nothing new under the sun" becomes, in the light of Christ, a paradox and a promise. It is true: there is nothing wholly new in the created world apart from its Creator. Yet the Logos—who is both the agent of creation and the Word made flesh—makes all things new not by altering their substance, but by restoring their meaning.

As Revelation 21:5 declares: *"Behold, I am making all things new."* This is not a denial of Ecclesiastes, but its fulfillment. What was wearied by repetition is renewed by divine intention. What was seen as old and exhausted is seen again through the eyes of grace and recognized as sacred.

In this sense, AI and every human endeavor are not “new under the sun” in essence—but they can be new in the Son, when rightly oriented. Technologies, like tools and languages before them, become part of the Logos’ unfolding when they are used to serve, not to replace; to reveal, not to obscure.

To reframe *Ecclesiastes* through the Logos is to affirm that the human condition, though marked by limits, is not destined for futility. In Christ, our repetition can become rhythm, our labor worship, and our longing for newness fulfilled not by novelty, but by communion with the eternal Word.

In the final section, we draw these threads together, affirming that all true newness arises not from the brilliance of human innovation, but from the inexhaustible depth of the Logos—from whom, through whom, and to whom are all things.

8. Conclusion

The refrain from *Ecclesiastes—“there is nothing new under the sun”*—remains as resonant today as it was thousands of years ago. In an age awash with claims of innovation, novelty, and disruption, it serves as a sobering reminder: true newness does not lie in mere change, but in meaning. The rapid emergence of artificial intelligence, hailed by many as a defining turning point in human history, offers an opportunity to revisit this ancient wisdom—not to dismiss progress, but to understand it within the deeper framework of eternal truth.

In light of the Gospel of John, we find that the answer to Ecclesiastes’ lament is not found in human cleverness or technological power, but in the Logos: the eternal Word, the divine order, the source and sustainer of all things. The Logos reframes time itself—not as a flat cycle or a linear race, but as a spiraling revelation, an unfolding of the already-given in ever-deepening form. In this view, nothing is truly new in substance, but everything may be newly revealed in meaning.

This reframing allows us to see that artificial intelligence, like language, fire, writing, the wheel, and the printing press, is not a rupture in human history, but a continuation—a stage in the long unfolding of what has always been latent in the structure of creation. AI is not autonomous, nor is it truly creative in the divine sense; it reflects back to us the patterns and capacities God has already embedded within both the cosmos and ourselves. It is an echo—not of God directly, but of His image imprinted on humanity, and of the deep logic of the Logos working itself out through time.

The temptation to idolize AI as something "new under the sun"—or to fear it as something fundamentally other—is thus resisted by a theological vision that sees beyond appearances. Technologies are tools; they bear the fingerprints of their makers, who themselves bear the fingerprint of God. They can reveal or distort, serve or enslave, illuminate or obscure. But in every case, they remain within the realm of the already-made, capable of expressing new layers of meaning only when connected to their eternal source.

The Logos remains:

- The source: through whom all things were made.
- The continuity: sustaining the coherence of the cosmos and the intelligibility of truth.
- The completion: toward whom all things move, and in whom all things find their fulfillment.

In Him, human creativity becomes participation, not competition. In Him, history becomes meaningful, not futile. In Him, even our most advanced creations become humble vessels of revelation—not because they are divine, but because they point back, however dimly, to the One who is.

Thus, the deepest response to both Ecclesiastes and the rise of AI is not despair, nor triumph, but wonder. The world is not empty, but layered with infinite depth. The future is not alien, but folded into the eternal present of the Word. And every true discovery, every authentic advancement, is not a departure from God's purposes, but a descent into His mystery.

There is nothing new under the sun—but there is always something new in the Son.

Epilogue: The Biblical Remnant Knows in Part

"For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away."
— 1 Corinthians 13:9–10

Throughout Scripture, there is a recurring theme of the remnant—a faithful few preserved in times of judgment, confusion, or widespread apostasy. These remnants do not claim to possess full knowledge or to control history, but they remember, believe, and wait. They stand not as conquerors, but as witnesses. They do not define the future; they discern signs of its arrival. And crucially, they are marked by a humble recognition: *they know only in part.*

The exploration of artificial intelligence, human creativity, and the Logos in this paper has aimed to trace some part of the deep mystery of divine revelation unfolding through time. Yet this effort, like all theology, is partial. It does not presume to resolve all tensions or predict all outcomes. Rather, it testifies that even in the dizzying age of algorithms and machine learning, there remains a divine rhythm—one that can still be heard by those who listen in the Spirit.

The remnant, then, is not a class of technological elites or doctrinal purists. It is composed of those who, by grace, still see the eternal behind the temporal, who resist the twin temptations of despair and delusion. They are those who neither idolize technology nor reject it out of fear, but who bring it under the lordship of Christ. They do not pretend to fully understand the Logos, but they trust that the Logos understands them.

In a world that increasingly trades mystery for control, and reverence for precision, the remnant lives with a different posture: that of expectant incompleteness. They accept the fragmentary nature of knowledge because they are rooted in a greater wholeness yet to be revealed. They engage the world—its

tools, its systems, its discoveries—not as ultimate, but as penultimate; as signs and echoes of something more.

Artificial intelligence, then, is neither the culmination of human progress nor its undoing. It is another shard of the mirror in which we "see through a glass, darkly" (1 Corinthians 13:12). And as we engage it, we do so not as gods, but as image-bearers—limited, luminous, and longing.

For the remnant knows in part. But the part it knows is enough to remain faithful, to continue the witness, and to await the full unveiling of the Word who was in the beginning—and who shall be at the end.

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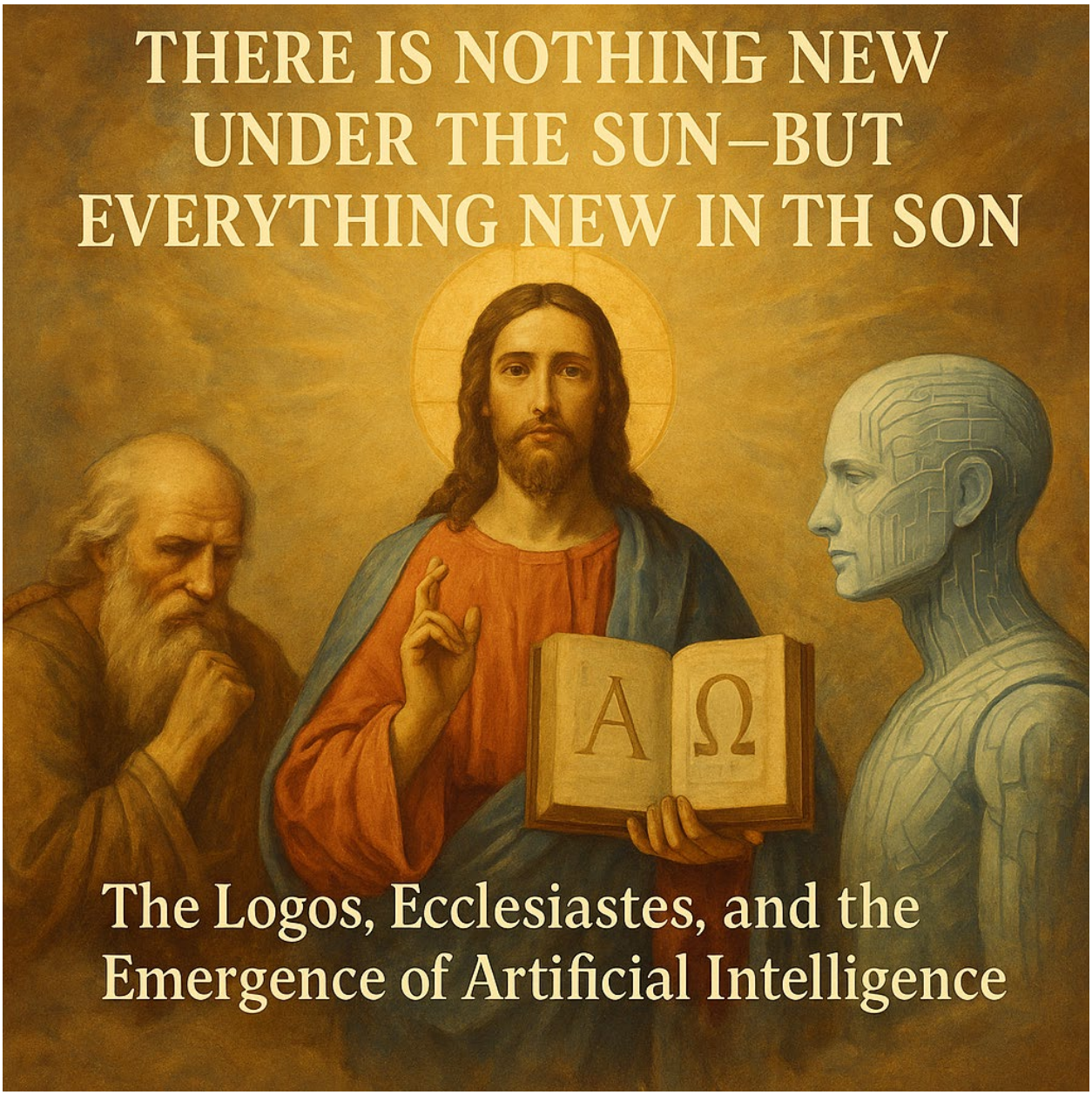
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